

# MoPac South Environmental Study

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# History of MoPac South Environmental Study



- **MoPac South project included in CAMPO 2035 plan**
- **Rider 42 passed, which focused on the top 50 most congested corridors – MoPac is listed as 37<sup>th</sup>**
- **Senator Kirk Watson develops a Mobility Investment Priorities for Central Texas Working Group including representatives from CAMPO, Capital Metro, TxDOT, City of Austin, and the Mobility Authority**
- **The Committee recommends providing \$16 million to study MoPac South from Lady Bird Lake to Slaughter Lane**
- **In 2013, the Mobility Authority and TxDOT launch MoPac South Environmental Study**

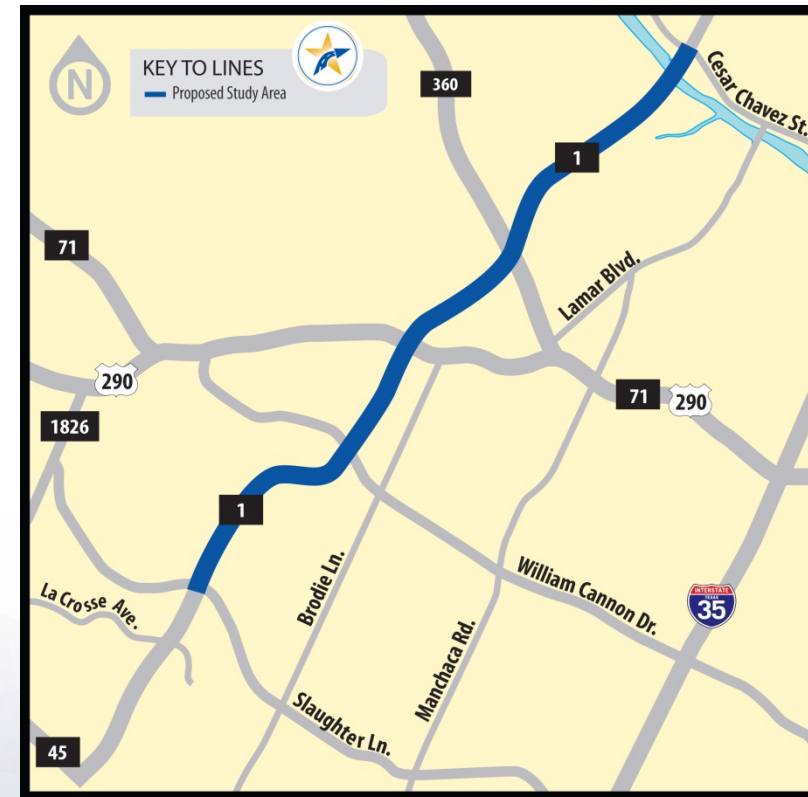
# MoPac South Environmental Study



- **MoPac south of Cesar Chavez Street is a vital artery for our area - it serves more than 130,000 cars and trucks per day**
- **Over time, residential, retail and commercial development in the corridor has led to increased congestion**
- **Environmental Study initiated to determine the best alternatives for improving mobility and safety on approximately eight miles of MoPac from Cesar Chavez Street to Slaughter Lane**



**MoPac South**  
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY





# Process and Major Activities to Date



- **Launched Environmental Study in April 2013**
  - Collected travel time, crash and safety, population and employment growth and environmental constraints data
  - Developed Purpose and Need
  - Launched project website [www.MoPacSouth.com](http://www.MoPacSouth.com)
  - Began stakeholder outreach
- **Held First Open House/Scoping Meeting in November 2013**
  - Refined Purpose and Need based on public input
  - Developed and refined concepts that may meet Purpose and Need using data collected and community feedback
- **Held Second Open House in April 2014**
  - Refined evaluation criteria and measurements based on Purpose and Need and community feedback
  - Evaluated concepts



- **What We are Trying to do:**

- Provide reliable travel times
- Improve efficiency
- Create dependable and consistent route for transit
- Facilitate reliable emergency response

- **What Problems We're Addressing:**

- Unreliable travel times\*
  - If we don't address the problem, conservative estimates result in an additional half hour to travel between Cesar Chavez Street and Slaughter Lane in 2035
- Increased congestion due to population and employment growth\*\*
  - 61% population growth in Travis and Hays counties by 2035
  - 74% employment growth in Travis and Hays counties by 2035

\*Travel Time Sources: CDM-Smith 2014 using INRIX speed data, CAMPO 2035 Travel Demand Model, observed congestion speeds, bluetooth data

\*\*Population Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: 1990 Census & 2008-2011 American Community Survey, CAMPO 2035 Forecast

# Which Alternatives Were Evaluated?



- **General Purpose Lanes**
- **High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes**
- **Transit Only Lanes**
- **Express Lanes**
- **Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management**
- **No Build**

# Where We Are Now



- **Presented preliminary results and requested feedback on evaluation criteria and measurements**
- **Presented recommended reasonable alternative – Express Lanes with conceptual layout**
- **Launched our Context Sensitive Solutions process**





# Express Lanes Alternative Being Advanced



- **Express Lanes Alternative is recommended because:**

- Offers reliable toll-free travel times for vanpools, buses and emergency vehicles
- Additional capacity will be actively managed through the use of variable toll pricing for other users to realize a similar reliable travel time
- Provides shortest peak period travel time for all vehicles, including those in general purpose lanes
- Saves over 3 million hours of travel time compared to No Build Alternative (*1.7 x more than HOV lanes and 13 x more than Transit Only Lanes*)
- Increases opportunities for transit and ridesharing
- Includes new and better connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Avoids impacts to the natural and human environment and minimizes impacts to water quality

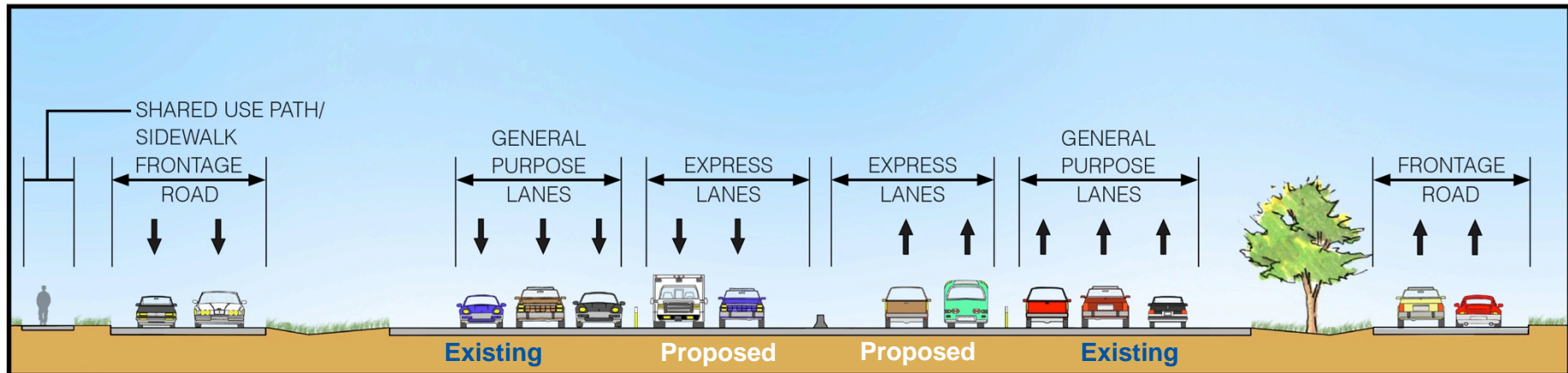


# About the Express Lanes Alternative



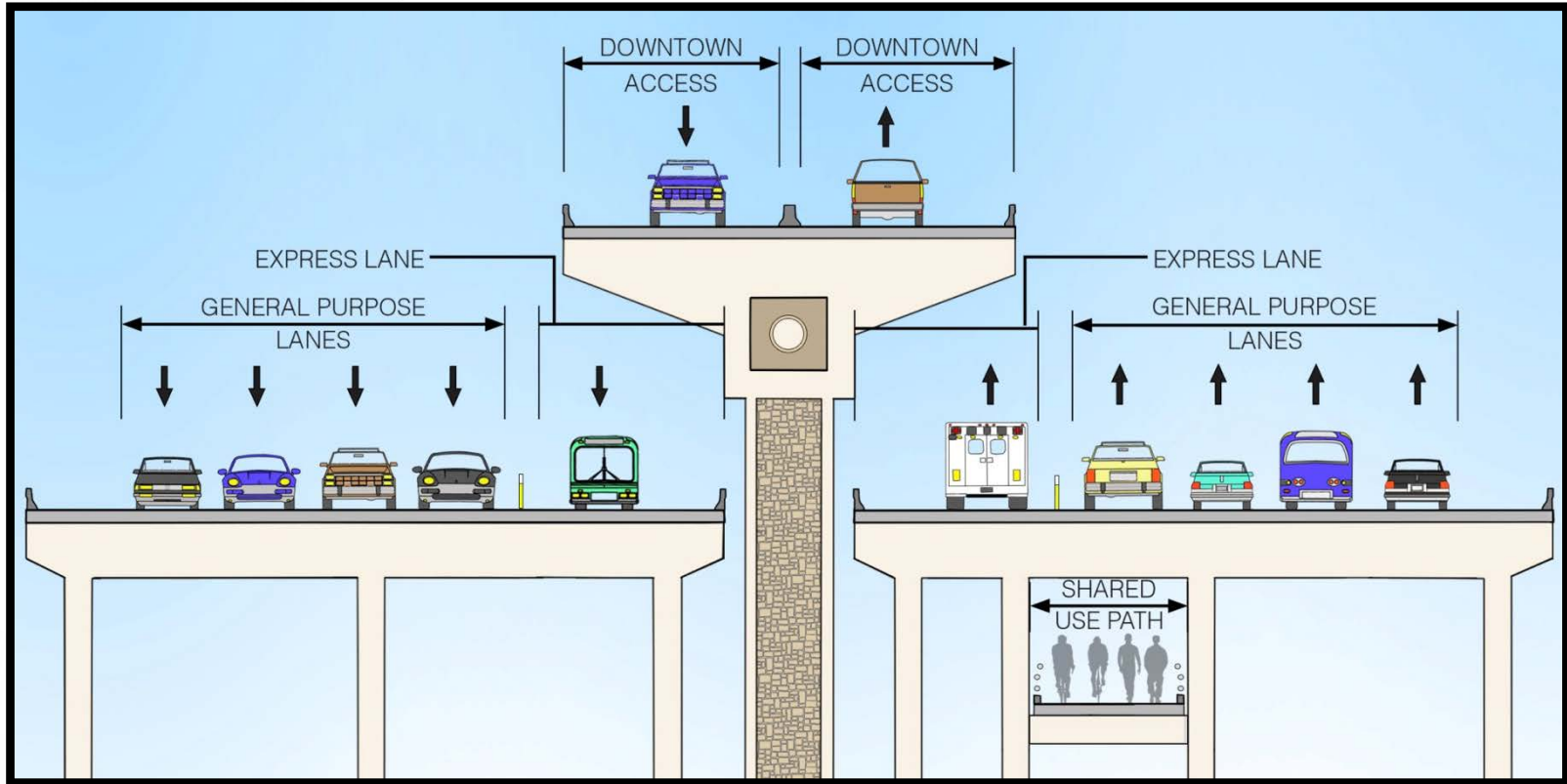
- **Addition of two Express Lanes in each direction (November 2013)**
  - Entrance and exits proposed near Cesar Chavez Street, Loop 360, William Cannon and Slaughter Lane
  - Preliminary cost estimates are approximately \$350 - 400 million (*no funds currently allocated to I-35 are being used for this project*)
- **Based on community feedback additional concepts being evaluated as part of this alternative:**
  - Connections in and out of downtown via Cesar Chavez Street and structures over the river
  - Operational improvements at the FM 2244 southbound general purpose exit
  - Addition of bike and pedestrian facilities to create continuous facility from Lady Bird Lake to Slaughter Lane

# Conceptual Typical Section



This artist rendering shown is conceptual in nature and are for discussion purposes only.

# Conceptual Typical Section at Lady Bird Lake



**This artist rendering shown is conceptual in nature and are for discussion purposes only.**



# View from Zilker Clubhouse



The artist renderings shown are conceptual in nature and are for discussion purposes only. Final alignments and construction elements may vary.

# View From Zilker Park



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# Benefits of a Downtown Connection



- **Creates a reliable connection to and from Cesar Chavez Street and downtown from the Express Lanes**
- **Prevents merging and weaving in general purpose lanes, improving travel for all MoPac users**
- **Provides relief for overly congested entrance and exit ramps at Lake Austin Boulevard and 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Streets**
- **Stays within TxDOT right of way and avoids expanding into Zilker Park and impacting Hike and Bike Trail**





## Additional work being undertaken

- Model one lane and two lane Express Lane concepts
- Requesting a traffic impact study and report from the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Texas on the downtown street grid including Cesar Chavez Street
- Develop multiple concepts to tie proposed MoPac South Express Lanes to the MoPac North project, as well as downtown via Cesar Chavez

# Environmental Considerations for Lady Bird Lake



- **Design that minimizes visual impacts, takes no parkland and minimizes disruption to recreational areas**
- **Columns designed to reduce impacts to water flow and the lakebed**
- **Water Pollution Abatement Plan and Best Management Practices for the project are being developed**
- **Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan will address and mitigate potential construction impacts**

# Next Steps



- **Continue to study environmental issues in greater detail**
- **Expand study period 3 to 6 months to allow for more public input and additional Open Houses on the project**
- **Collect and analyze data regarding potential environmental impacts and constructability**
- **Refine schematics and design concepts to address environmental issues and community feedback**
- **Hold Next Open House Meeting in August**
- **Continuously engage and meet with stakeholders**



# Ways to Stay Involved and Informed



- **Project website: [MoPacSouth.com](http://MoPacSouth.com)**
- **Enewsletters and social media (@MoPacSouth)**
- **Open Houses and Virtual Open Houses**
- **Technical workgroup meetings**
- **Stakeholder meetings**